Chartering Sustainable New Clubs in 6 Weeks

A Workshop for Sponsors & Mentors

01 Qualify the Lead

02 Build Your Team

03 PR & Recruitment

04 The Launch Event

05 Close & Follow Up

06 Charter Paperwork

Why New Clubs Die?

01

Built on hope, not commitment

- Absence of purpose
- No named owner.
- No confirmed payment path.
- No champion with authority.
- An enthusiastic contact is not a sponsor.

02

Lost momentum between launch and charter

- Forms not ready.
- Payment information not available.
- No follow-up call.
- Next event three weeks later.
- Charter Collapse is always predictable and always preventable.

The Full Process — First Contact to Charter

Every step matters. Skip one and you are in recovery mode.

01 Qualify the Lead
Hot or not?

02 Build Your Team
Sponsors, mentors, sponsoring club

03 PR & Outreach
Fill the room

04 Launch Event
Guest-focused programme

05 Close & Follow Up
Payment on the day

06 Charter Paperwork
Docs to WHQ

Pre-launch (steps 1–2): 4–12 weeks

The 6-week sprint (steps 3–6) starts only when steps 1–2 are complete

01 Qualify the Lead

No Lukewarm Leads - ***You can't charter enthusiasm. A hot lead has three things confirmed.***

Who owns it?

- **Corporate:** Named Executive Champion with budget authority (corporate)
- **Community:** A committed founding lead
- An enthusiast without authority is a warm contact, not a champion.

Who pays and how?

- **Corporate:** Vendor registration started, PO path identified, payment cycle confirmed before sprint starts.
- **Community:** Bank account available to collect payments (Sponsoring club)
- No confirmed payment path = no sprint.

Can you fill the room?

- **Community:** 60+ guests needed.
- **Community:** 60–100+ guests needed.
- How many registrations do you need to make these numbers?

If any answer is vague – the lead is not ready. Move on.

Sources of Club Leads

1. Annual email to members from Area Director to find out if anyone is in an inconvenient club or has an opportunity to start a corporate programme in their organisation.

2. Target organisations with clubs in other districts with a presence in your area.

3. Find market analysts in the district to advise the District Marketing Team on market opportunities in each location of the district that we can target for new clubs.

4. Close the gap on the district map by identifying areas with no Toastmasters service. Analyse list of members of online clubs with remote addresses.

Lead Qualification: Two Questions First

Q1

Is the pool large enough to sustain a club?

People who can attend regularly — not just people who exist on site.

Q2

Is there a genuine gap — or just enthusiasm?

Is this underserved? Or would members join an existing club nearby?

The answer determines club TYPE — not just viability

If Q1 is YES and Q2 is YES → proceed to size the club
If Q1 is YES but Q2 is NO → the lead is warm, not hot. Pause and investigate existing clubs.
If Q1 is NO → the site is not viable. Don't proceed. Walk away now, not in Month 7.

The Number Sponsors Get Wrong

Charter minimum and sustainability target are two different conversations.

20

Charter minimum

The legal threshold to register the club.

- ✗ Does not account for dropout in months 1–6
- ✗ At 60% attendance: exactly 12 at a meeting
- ✗ One bad month = below quorum immediately
- ✗ Do not present this as the target

VS

28–40+

Sustainability target

By club type — the number that keeps a club running in Year 1.

- ✓ Absorbs normal dropout and absence variance
- ✓ Provides role redundancy — meetings don't thin out
- ✓ Gives the club time to recruit before it looks fragile
- ✓ This is the number to use with sponsors

Be explicit with sponsors: 20 to register. 28–40+ to survive.

The Numbers That Actually Sustain a Club

Community

28–32

members

60–70% attendance rate.
Holidays, illness, early dropout.
You need the buffer.

Launch event: 60+ guests

Corporate

40+

members

50–65% attendance.
Project deadlines, travel, off-sites.
Half the room can disappear in any given day.

Launch event: 60–100 guests

Call Centre/ Shift Club

50+

members

40–55% attendance.
Shift rotation = structural absence.
40 members = ~20 on an average day.

Launch event: 80–120+ guests

The launch event is not a celebration — it is a conversion mechanism. Applications and payment on the day.

Corporate or Community? The Honest Test

CORPORATE CLUB

200+ staff on site
This is the minimum for sustainable critical mass. Below 200, attendance variance will collapse a corporate club within a year. 200 is not a target - it's a floor.

An office park club?
200 staff across multiple tenants can work — but only if one tenant hosts and champions, or the park management sponsors. It's harder. Treat it as community-light unless you have a named corporate sponsor.

Executive Champion confirmed
Budget authority + direct access to staff. Not a fan - a funder.

Programme Owner confirmed
A middle manager who owns attendance accountability. This is the person who chases absences. Without them, corporate clubs die at Month 3.

Payment path active
Vendor registration started. PO path identified. If these aren't started in Week 1, your financial charter will be 12+ weeks away.

COMMUNITY CLUB

Clear geographic or time gap
Members are travelling 30+ minutes to the nearest club, or the nearest club meets at an unusable time (e.g. 7am for parents). Verify this — don't assume.

Different niche or day
Same day/time as an existing club nearby is a split, not a new club. Toastmasters has enough paper clubs.

Named club sponsor
Active Toastmaster, in good standing. Not a 'friend of the district' — a committed mentor with time to show up.

Bank account confirmed
Community clubs collect dues directly. No bank account = no launch. Open it before the launch event, not after.

Founding member base
Do you have 8–10 genuinely committed founding members before launch? If not, you don't have a club — you have a mailing list.

02 Build Your Qualified Team

The Area Director appoints the team before the clock starts.

🏛 Sponsoring Club

- Supports the launch event including collecting payments.
- Offers encouragement, advice and support for future events
- Attends charter presentation and future club events

🤝 Two Sponsors

- Creates/Knows and Understands purpose of new club
- Markets the new club to prospective members
- Helps with launch events and all charter forms
- Plans the charter ceremony/celebration

🎓 Two Mentors

- Guides the club through first 6–12 months, supporting (**not leading**) club events and ExCo meetings
- Supports leadership team to maintain an active membership building plan post-charter.
- Plans exit from Day 1 by building leadership pipeline ***e.g. incorporate members into sub-committees*** and supporting them to build a healthy Toastmasters & club culture that is aligned with the purpose of the club.

🏢 Corporate Setup

- Executive Champion: budget authority
- Programme Owner: attendance accountability
- Without both layers — club dies at Month 3
- Incorporate Toastmasters programme in company's learning and development programme.

Materials needed: Building a Toastmasters Club Manual · Blank Invoices · Launch Event Pack · Club Leadership Handbook · Moments of Truth

The Readiness Test

Five questions before you accept a sponsor or mentor role.

1 **Can you commit to all 6 weeks or 6 months?**

Not just the launch night. Check your calendar before answering.

2 **Do you know the WHQ charter paperwork?**

App to Organise · Charter Member List · Proof of Dues · Officer Records · Sponsor Confirmation.

3 **Can you name the four failure modes?**

No procurement alignment · Weak champion · No leadership bench · Momentum lost post-launch.

4 **Do you have a handover plan?**

(Mentor) How does the club run without you? 'When it's stable' is not a plan.

5 **Are you in good standing?**

Toastmasters requirement. Both sponsors must be active, paid members. Not optional.

The silence when you ask Q3 is the lesson. It tells you exactly what pre-role training is missing.

03 PR & Recruitment

Set the date at least 3 weeks in advance. Publicise immediately. Fill the room — then run the event.

CORPORATE

→ Email blast from Executive Champion to all staff — authority matters

→ Internal comms: intranet post, team meeting shoutout, Slack/Teams announcement

→ Manager briefing: ask each manager to encourage 1–2 reports to attend

→ Personal invite from Programme Owner — follow up every registration

→ Target: 60–120+ confirmed registrations. Below 30 in room = reschedule

COMMUNITY

→ Email all nearby Toastmasters clubs — ask each member to bring one guest from their FROGS

→ LinkedIn, Facebook, Meetup: launch event page set up in Week 1. Use advertising to boost lead count.

→ Leverage professional associations like Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, etc. and advertise in public spaces like malls, community centres, etc.

→ Personal outreach from founding members to their own networks

→ Target: 60+ confirmed. Below 25 in room = reschedule. Fix the pipeline first.

The Pause Rule: By end of Week 2, if you can't hit minimum room numbers — pause. The cause is always in Week 1.

04 Launch Event — Programme Design

The programme is fixed. Do not improvise. 60–90 minutes maximum. Guests first, always.

5 min	**Welcome & Context** *Why this club, why now. Member Moment. Brief — don't oversell.*
10 min	**Prepared Speech — Newer Speaker** *Mirrors the audience. Shows Toastmasters is for everyone — not just experts.*
10 min	**Prepared Speech — Advanced** *Shows the higher skill level achievable.*
10 min	**Evaluation** *Demonstrates the feedback culture. Often the most surprising moment for guests.*
10 min	**Guest Storytelling** *Guests share a 60-sec story. When they speak, they join. This is the conversion mechanism.*
15 min	**What's In It For Me** *Close the sale. Prepared answers ready for fees, commitment, schedule. Helps new members sign forms and make payment*

Key: Mirror the audience · Respect the clock · Collect money on the night · Confirm the next event date before anyone leaves

05 Close & Follow Up

Momentum evaporates within 48 hours. Everything must be ready before the guests arrive.

ON THE NIGHT

Closing script
Community: 'Complete your application today so we can include you from the very first session.'

Introduce sponsors & mentors
Emphasise that mentors guide the club for 6–12 months — this is not a one-night event.

Applications + payment NOW
Never say 'we'll email you the form.' Have forms, fee schedule, and payment method ready.

Set next event date
Announce it before anyone leaves. Put it in their calendars. Confirm the venue.

Explain costs clearly
Charter fee, dues, banner, pins, admin. No surprises.

POST-EVENT (48 HOURS)

Invoice within 24 hours
Every applicant who gave their details gets an invoice the next morning. No exceptions.

Call every applicant by 48h
A personal call — not an email. Confirm commitment, answer questions, hold momentum.

Submit to WHQ promptly
Don't let paperwork sit. Delays here push charter out by weeks.

Confirm first 3 event dates and venue
In writing. To everyone who applied. Calendar invites sent.

At least 1 new member/event
Keep the door open. The founding cohort will lose some — plan for it. New clubs die due to a stalled membership building plan post-charter.

Charter Collapse is predictable. It follows the same pattern every time: no form, no call, no first meeting.

06 Charter Paperwork

Onerous the first time. Set aside several hours. You will need signatures and everything must be consistent.

Application to Organise

Submit to WHQ before the launch event. Required for club number and official tracking.

Charter Member List

20 members minimum.

Proof of Dues Payment

Every charter member must have paid. No exceptions. No names without payment.

Officer Election Records

All six officer positions filled and elected by members at a formal meeting. No unnamed slots.

Sponsor Confirmation

Two sponsors confirmed, named, documented. Both must be active, in-good-standing members.

First 3 Event Dates

Confirmed in writing before submission. WHQ requires evidence of continuity, not just intention.

Pathways Onboarding

Scheduled within first 2 events. Not optional — it is part of the charter commitment.

Financial Charter Timeline

Payment clears WHQ in weeks 4–12. Tell sponsors this upfront. It is not failure delayed.

The District Team will support you through the paperwork. You are not doing this alone. But you must start it the same week as the launch event.

Three Anchors

When the room is tired and the lead looks warm enough — come back to these.

01 Speed Creates Momentum

The 6-week window is real. After it, priorities shift and leads go cold. Velocity is not stress — it is the product.

02 Ownership Creates Sustainability

A club with no named owner is a club waiting to collapse. The owner is not a title — it is the person who answers when things go wrong.

03 Walk Away from Lukewarm Leads

A collapse in Month 7 is worse than a pause in Week 2. Protect the club, the District and your credibility.

One action. Per person. This week.

**If the new club is isolated,
do not just build that club -**
build a new area.